



IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraph [0036] as follows:

[0036] A pair of cylindrical rods 60 mounted at diametrically spaced positions on the radially inner surfaces of each of the front mounting plate 16, the gradient coil locator plate 32 and the probe spacer plate 40. Plastic screws 61 may be radially threaded through the outer radial surface of these annular components and into the cylindrical rods 60 so as to hold the rods in axial and radial alignment with respect to each other and with respect to the positioning assembly 10.

Please amend paragraph [0044] as follows:

[0044] As further seen in Figures 9 and 11, the side rails 86 are each formed with an outwardly facing longitudinally or axially-extending V-shaped groove 88, which is dimensioned to slidably and securely receive the cylindrical rods 60 on the positioning assembly 10. The cylindrical circular surfaces 87 on the rods 60 provide a self-centering effect or action on the specimen positioning assembly 72, as the circular outer sliding surfaces on rods 60 tend to center themselves with the V-shaped grooves 88 extending axially along the side rails 86. This adds significantly to the accurate alignment of the specimen position assembly 72 within the magnet bore 12.

Please amend paragraph [0048] as follows:

[0048] The specimen positioning assembly 72 is pushed along the rods 60 and through the central bores in the plates 16, 32 and 40 until end plate 76 abuts the front mounting plate 16. This results in optimum placement of the specimen in the positioning assembly 10. For example, the axes of the ear bars 84 are advantageously aligned to pass near or through the center line 92 (Figures 2 and 10) of the MRI machine so that the specimen is imaged in the “sweet spot” of the imaging field.